



The History of Michoacán

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Michoacán Seal

Every winter, Michoacán plays host to thousands of North America's monarch butterflies. Residents and tourists alike also enjoy Michoacán's festive Day of the Dead celebration and visits to the Parícutin volcano, which last erupted in 1952. The primary industries in Michoacán are mining, farm products and tourism. Iron ore deposits are mined throughout the state, in addition to iron, zinc, and steel.

Early History

Numerous indigenous groups have inhabited the Michoacán area during the past 6,000 years. These groups predominantly settled in the basin of the Chapala and Cuitzeo rivers and include the Nahuas, Otomies and Matlazincas. The most dominant group in the region was the Purhépechans (also known as the Tarascans). However, because the tribe lacked a written language, much of their origin and early history are unknown. Tribal stories, legends and customs were passed down through oral traditions, many of which have been lost.

The Purhépecha language is distantly related to Quechua, one of the main languages in the Andean zone of South America. Some believe that the Purhépechas came from Peru and are distant relatives of the Incas. They settled in present-day Michoacán around the 11th century A.D. By 1324, they had become the dominant force in western Mexico. Their first capital city, Pátzcuaro, was situated on the shores of Lake Pátzcuaro, Mexico's highest lake. Later, they relocated their capital to Tzintzuntzan, where they lived peacefully until the Spaniards arrived in the early 16th century.

Middle History

In April 1519, Hernán Cortés arrived on the east coast of Mexico near present day Veracruz. As he and his army made their way westward from the Gulf Coast, Cortés met with leaders of the various Indian tribes, aligning himself with the Totonacs, the Tlaxcalans, the Otomí and Cholulans. Cortés arrived in Tenochtitlán (the site of present-day Mexico City) in November 1519 with a huge army of both Spanish and native warriors.

After conquering Tenochtitlán in 1521, Cortés entered Michoacán and convinced King Tangoxoán to allow Spanish soldiers to enter Tzintzuntzan unopposed. The primary mission of the Spaniards was to find gold and silver in Tangoxoán's mountainous kingdom, and upon its discovery in western Michoacán, foreigners poured into the area. Tarascans were soon forced to labor in the mines and support the colonist's efforts. As was the case throughout much of Mexico during this time, the indigenous populations soon found themselves victimized by Spanish masters who saw them as simply a means to an end.

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In 1528, a Spanish attorney named Nuño Guzman de Beltran was appointed by Spanish King Carlos V to take control of the region. Guzman, a ruthless leader who treated the natives cruelly, was excommunicated by the church in 1529. Fearing the loss of his military standing as well, Guzman fled to Michoacán where he brutally tortured and killed Tangoxoán in 1530. Fearing for their lives, most of Tarascan population fled to the mountains of Michoacán. Had it not been for Bishops Bartolomé de Las Casas and Zumárraga, who prepared a case against Guzmán that led to his arrest and return to Spain, the Tarascan people may well have been decimated. Over the next three centuries, Michoacán maintained a predominantly agrarian economy, and its population tripled from approximately 300,000 to around 900,000.

Recent History

Around 1810, the independence movement began in Mexico. Mexican priest and revolutionary Miguel Hidalgo captured the Michoacán capital of Morelia, where he was appointed governor and declared the end of slavery.

Like most of Mexico in the 19th century, Michoacán was plagued by political instability. Taking office after the death of President Benito Juárez, Porfirio Díaz initiated a long period of liberal authoritarian rule known as Porfiriato. Although Díaz brought peace to the country, his policies favored the landed gentry over the indigenous populations and the working class.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910 again turned the state into a battleground. Several revolutionary leaders fought for land reform in Michoacán, supported by thousands of landless peasants who clamored for more rights and the fair distribution of land. Michoacán had limited involvement in major revolutionary activity, however attacks by insurgent mobs, country-wide banditry, drought and devastating epidemics ravaged the state during this time.

Lázaro Cárdenas, one of the most important Mexican presidents of the 20th century, was a native of Michoacán. He took office in 1934, adopted land reforms and gave millions of peasants the right to farm on communal (shared) lands. Cárdenas also nationalized the country's oil companies. This provided the government with money for education, health care and public services.

Michoacán Today

Michoacán produces more avocados than any other state in Mexico, which is the world's largest supplier of avocados. The city of Uruapan, Michoacán, is known as the avocado capital of the world. The state also ranks third in the production of chickpeas and lemons and fourth in sesame and sorghum crops. Sugarcane, corn and wheat are also important staples, as are fruits such as mangoes, strawberries, papaya and limes.

Livestock production is another source of revenue for the state, with pork, beef and poultry being chief commodities. The state is also known for its production of milk, eggs, honey and beeswax. The lumber and fishing industries also provide significant income for the state.

Michoacán's tourist industry owes much of its success to butterflies. Every year between the months of October and March, approximately 20 million monarch butterflies migrate to Michoacán from all over North America, traveling up to 1,864 miles to spend the winter in the mountains. When the monarchs arrive, they cover so many surfaces the color of the forest appears to change from green to orange and black.



Facts & Figures

Capital: Morelia

Major Cities (population): Morelia (684,145) Uruapan (279,229)

Zamora (170,748) Lázaro Cárdenas (162,997) Zitácuaro (136,491)

Size/Area: 23,202 square miles

Population: 3,966,073 (2005 Census)

Photo at left: Monarch butterflies covering the forest in Michoacán during their 8 month stay in Mexico before heading back up north.

President's Article

FOT PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE SEPTEMBER

Here we are in September! I hope everyone had a nice summer and you were able to relax and enjoy life, even if you had to endure the terrible heat that we had here in Canoga.

We had a successful event with the Interview of Francis Lederer and "Romance in Manhattan". Joy Picus joined us AND we had a wonderful article about FOT written by Dennis McCarthy in the Valley News published on Friday, August 10. Did you get a chance to see it?



Barbara White

In September we are having a Cowboy Party at the Lewis' house! Come join us for steak and potatoes and all of the fixings!

Our Fiesta Fling Harvest Ball is coming soon! On Saturday, October 13 at the Canoga Park Women's Club we will be having a dinner dance. Remember that this is our major fundraiser for the year! Please help us in planning this wonderful event. We will have gift baskets to raffle off AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!!! Please – if you can donate a gift card to any store or restaurant, or any "good as new" item that we can use in a basket, let Barb White know – 818-347-2136. OR next time you go to your favorite restaurant, please ask if they would consider giving a gift certificate for the Friends of Taxco. Randy will be emailing a donation letter that you can use. Give the letter to the restaurant and their donation will be tax deductible. These certificates will "spice up" our baskets and make them irresistible! With your help, we can really make our Fiesta Fling Harvest Ball a huge success! Remember that the money we raise will keep our club solvent and allow us to give more beautiful educational gifts to our sister city, Taxco.

Our Taxco friends called in July and asked us to postpone our October visit to 2019. And so we are looking at some May dates for our travel. Keep an eye out and we will advise you of the new dates.

Join me in working to keep our club a success! Thank you to all of our volunteers who each month volunteer their time and talent for the Friends of Taxco!

Love,
Barb White 818-347-2136 rushandbarbwhite@gmail.com

In Memoriam

Obdulio Santiago Galeana

October 1, 1926 - August 15, 2018

We are very sad to inform our membership of the passing of our long time supporter Obdulio. He was a marvelous man who was full of love and compassion, which he freely gave to everyone he knew. Any individuals who would like to make a donation in his name to the Taxco Gift Fund, please send it to:
Linda Lewis - P.O. Box 9070 - Canoga Park, CA 91309





FRIENDS OF TAXCO

Established 1963

September 3, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Our "People to People" program was established in 1963, with President Eisenhower's and our founders' vision to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities. Taxco, Guerrero Mexico (located between Mexico City & Acapulco) is the beautiful Sister City of Canoga Park. For over a half century we have built a special bond and relationships between our communities, along with contributing to the building of 15 schools, furnished library books, science labs and school sanitary facilities. Our most recent contribution was the donation of two microscopes, valued at \$3,500, to CBTis 82 School whose noble mission is to: "To train people with technological knowledge in the industrial, commercial and service areas."

Next month we will have our major fund raising event to support these programs and it is our hope that you may be able to donate a prize or gift certificate to this worthwhile cause.

The Friends of Taxco Sister City organization is a designated IRS 501 (c) (3) public charity and our tax-exempt number is 95-1779545.

Sincerely,

Bruce Troe,
Vice President

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO
JOIN THE FOT



Oct. 13, 2018

Dinner / Dance

Music provided by Rick Jarrett

Buffet Dinner \$30

Choice of Carved Roast Beef or Salmon

Social hour 6:00 Dinner 7:00
ENJOY RAFFLES/DINNER/DANCING



Canoga Park Women's Club
7401 Jordan Ave.



Please provide your dinner preference when
placing your reservation to Bobbie.

818-388-7801 or bobbiejoann2@gmail.com

Steaks On The Chisholm Trail



September 15th



6:00 PM Social - 7:00 Dinner

LEWIS' RANCH

21305 Chase St.

Morsel's, New York Steak
Chisholm Slaw, Baked Taters
Whistle Berries, Dessert

\$20.00 per person



RSVP Bobbie Strelow (818) 388-7801 bobbiejoann2@gmail.com

Calendar of Events 2018

- September 15 **Steaks on the Chisholm Trail - 6:00 PM**
\$20.00 Randy & Linda Lewis Home - 21305 Chase St.
- September 22 **Board Meeting - 10:00 AM - Brunch**
White Home - 22619 Marlin Place
- October 13 **Fall Festival - 6:00 PM Social - 7:00 PM Dinner**
\$30.00 Canoga Park Women's Club - 7401 Jordan Ave.
- October 27 **Board Meeting - 10:00 AM - No Brunch**
TBD
- November 4 **General Meeting - 1:00 PM Luncheon**
\$12.00 Canoga Park Women's Club - 7401 Jordan Ave.
- November 10 **Australia "Walk-About" Dinner - 6:00 PM**
Lamoreaux & Strelow Homes
- November 17 **Board Meeting - 10:00 AM - No Brunch**
TBD



FRIENDS OF TAXCO
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